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finely cemented than the rock in which they have developed, they are more resistant to denudation. Therefore they serve to protect the rock in which they are enclosed. Certain pinnacles in Bad Land regions, and certain buttes and knobs, are thus explained as the result of the protection of one part by the presence of concretions, while denudation has removed less protected rock round about. It would be interesting to apply Todd's suggestions to a given region of abundant concretions in order to determine the measure of importance of this element of influence in land sculpture. R. S. T.

HUMAN BONES FOUND NEAR GALVESTON.

A Letter Communicated by Mr. James Douglas.

October 12th, 1903.

Dr. James Douglas, President,
El Paso & Southwestern R.R. Co.,
99 John St., New York City, N. Y.

Dear Sir:—

Complying with your request to furnish you the data relative to the human bones found in the ballast pits of the Galveston, La Porte & Houston Ry. (now part of Southern Pacific) near Galveston, Texas, I beg to say:

The ballast pits are situated at the mouth of Clear Creek about 32 miles southeast of Houston, Texas, and 25 miles from Galveston, and lie between the creek and the Bay. Originally they covered about 20 acres, and rose to an elevation of 18 or 20 feet above mean low tide. The deposit consisted of about 50% shell of various kinds, oyster, clam, etc., 40% gravel and 10% coarse sand. The whole deposit was covered with about eight inches of soil, and had a dense growth of live-oak trees, some of which seemed very old. The deposit was in seven distinct strata, averaging about 2½ ft. in thickness, with about two inches of black earth between.

All the strata were very much the same, except the bottom one and the second one from the top. These two had very little gravel in them, and consisted of oyster shells (larger than in the other strata) and black earth, and it was in these two "veins" that we found the human bones, one "layer" of bones a little over three feet below the surface, and the other at sea level about twenty feet below surface.

We found very few bones in the upper stratum—probably ten per cent. of the whole—the greater majority being at about the present sea level.

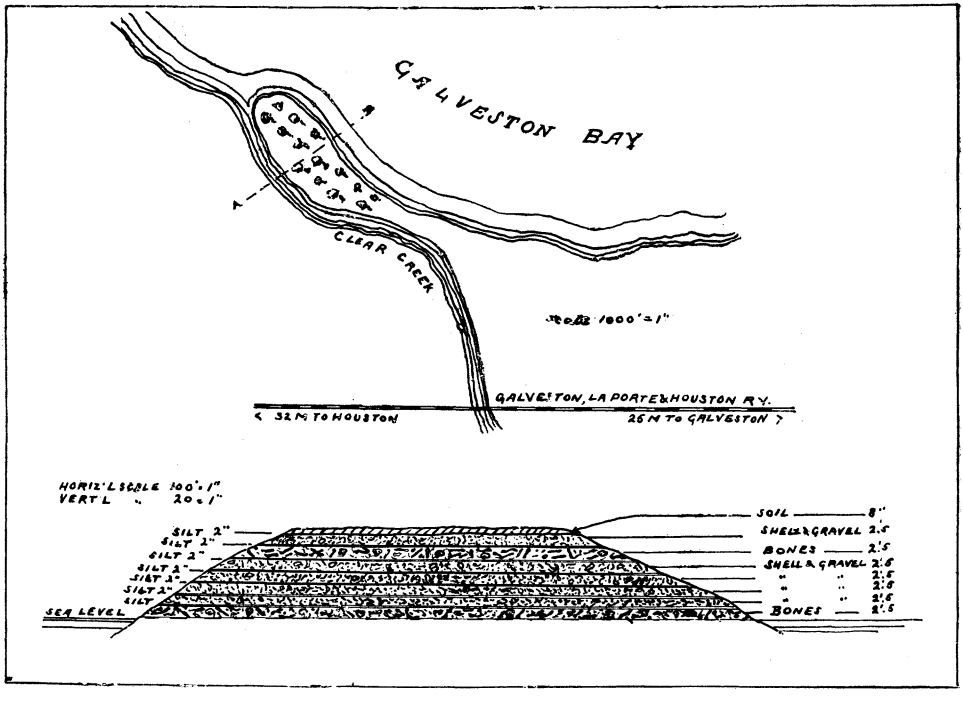
No accurate count of the total number found was kept, but over fifteen hundred were actually tallied, and a conservative estimate would be five thousand.

At first the gravel was loaded by hand, and during this period the foreman counted the skulls, but, later on, a steam shovel was put to work, and after that no count was attempted, though the bones were uncovered daily until the entire pit was worked out.

We usually found two or more skeletons together, and, in one instance, found fourteen, all practically touching.

They were, of course, in no regular order, but were in every conceivable position. When first exposed the bones were wet and soft, but after drying in the sun would be fairly hard and firm. After the steam shovel was put to work, practically all bones were broken when they got to the surface. Some of the skulls were of enormous size, and all had very low foreheads. All seemed to be adults, and one noticeable feature was the almost perfect condition of the teeth, which showed absolutely no sign of decay.

Several broken pieces of pottery were found, also some presumably ivory beads,



about 1½ inches long, with a hole lengthwise through the centre and a diagonal groove on the outside.

Some of these bones were sent to the Pan-American Exposition at Buffalo some years ago.

The last of this shell deposit was removed during the Summer of 1896.

I attach a small sketch, made from memory, showing approximately the location of the ground and the arrangement of the strata.

Yours respectfully,

(Signed) H. J. SIMMONS,
General Superintendent.